

Introducing Anthony Geddes, Confor Manager for Wales

Confor has appointed Anthony Geddes as its new National Manager for Wales.

Anthony, 37, was formerly a forestry surveyor for John Clegg and is well-known to the forestry sector in Wales.

He brings many years of experience in both land management and renewable energy projects.

Anthony's major challenge is to turn around the graph on new woodland creation and hold the Welsh Government to its annual target of 4000ha of new planting.

There is also an opportunity for a more integrated approach to land management and rural development.

Anthony says "Forestry and timber has been a central part of my career for the last decade and I'm delighted to be joining Confor to use my experience to keep building the sector's influence in Wales on behalf of members. I'm passionate about communicating the positive forestry and timber story in Wales to all Confor stakeholders and to the general public. There are political, environmental and fiscal chal-

lenges facing the sector, but I think we have a really great opportunity to press the environmental, economic and social case for more tree planting and greater use of timber in Wales. I look forward to meeting up with our Welsh members to learn their priorities and ensure we move forestry forward together in an effective and constructive way."

Anthony started on 26 November. He can be contacted at

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Q&A

Favourite tree?

Broad leaf - Ginkgo biloba, they cast an amazing silhouette. Conifer - Douglas fir lovely soft needles and it's such a diverse building material too.

Favourite drink?

At work tea; after work red wine

Favourite film, book or TV show?

Italian Job, what's not to love amazing scenery, great soundtrack and awful British cars!

Favourite sport?

To watch it has to be rugby.

How did you get into forestry?

Professionally it was all the fault of the RFS: I met John Clegg at their offices one day and the rest is history. Personally, I grew up in the Wye Valley and have been walking dogs in woods for as long as I can remember.

What did you do before you joined Confor?

I'm fortunate to have a broad range of skills including a background in timber recycling and power generation. Prior to joining Confor I was a surveyor with John Clegg & Co Forestry Agents.

What are you most looking forward to in this role?

Getting to know the members in Wales and building on the amazing achievements of Martin.

What do you think is the biggest challenge in Wales at present?

Planting! There are so many challenges facing forestry especially with the Land Use Policy paper. My concern is that almost all the political focus is for the post-Brexit landscape.

Tree planting is needed now! It will help the future industry, maintain current employment, boost investor interest in forestry and start us on the path to achieving our Climate Change Commitments.

What question would you like to ask Confor members?

Would you recommend us to a friend? What attracted me to Confor is the work they do for the membership and for the forest industry. I'm excited to be part of that and want more people to become members. I'd like to know why we get recommended and what we can do to build on that.

What are you most likely to be found doing at the weekend?

Either out on my mountain bike amongst the trees or in my workshop persuading some antiquated piece of machinery back into life.